

## Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, November 29, 1876, with transcript

Letter from Miss Mabel Hubbard to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. PALACE HOTEL, Between Blue Cañon and Ogden, San Francisco, Nov. 29th, 1876. My dear Alec:

Before thanking you for your letter of Nov. 17th, let me tell you we are going at the rate of 45 miles an hour, and that our two cars are drawn by the engine that drew the famous lightning express, and that this was it's average speed! Now don't go and get alarmed, if I am to be killed by it I'll telegraph you before this reaches. Pardon me Alec but you are really getting too nervous for anything, the idea of forbidding my riding on the platform, to be consistent, why don't you forbid my travelling in the cars at all. There is danger in it, there is danger "in my goings out and comings in." If we are to be killed we shall be killed, all the care won't help it, if not we are quite safe on the platform holding with good strong grasp to the rails. It is not like ordinary platform riding, all the ladies come out even the Foxes who are anything but venturesome. I wish you would please answer my questions. I have asked several and you have taken no notice of them, please do so in your next as I still am anxious. Papa does not seem alarmed about Mr. Edison. I have confidence that if you work on steadily no one can harm you. I don't want to see just what you have done.

We have come down to the treeless plains once more, how dreadfully dreary and ugly they look after the beautiful woodland hills we have passed through. We grumbled considerably in being aroused early just to see ourselves passing through a snow-shed 40 miles long, but the car stopped and we got out and hurried down over the frozen 2 snow to see beautiful Donner Lake lying deep below us. The glassy green waters reflected like a mirror, the high wooded or bare stone mountains frowning above it. So beautiful and peaceful it looked there amid the green fire it was hard to realize what a terrible tragedy was acted out on it's banks one fearful winter, and which gave it it's name. A party of

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emigrants were making their slow way over years ago when one of their members, Mr. Donner, fell ill and refused to go further. Every one else but his wife and a German left them with some cattle. In the night a snow-storm arose and fell twenty feet deep. They built a crude cabin but Mr. Donner died, and when rescuers came they found the German sitting and before the door eating a human arm. He recovered and said Mrs. Donner had died of starvation, but we never can tell if she really died peacefully or was foully dealt with. On we went through a succession of lovely woodland and then all of a sudden found ourselves without a tree in sight, we are surrounded by beautiful mountains but they are far away.

Mr. Kraft is real nice, if he were only a head taller and a few years older he might answer as a brother-in-law, he has just given Sister a book with her name most exquisitely illuminated, it must have taken him hours to design and paint it. The two talk and talk, I doubt if we had so much to say. He must be a fine young fellow, he has the whole support of a widowed mother and several young brothers and sisters to bear.

Mr. Fox, Sister thinks the most conceited man she ever met, he always writes Ex-Mayor of Phila. after his name or else Postal Com. ap. by Congress. She says he knows and does nothing about the work. He is very pleasant and fine looking. Mr. Cosy Postmaster of 3 San Francisco has sent the commissioners and secretary each a pair of the finest California blankets, worth \$22. each. These blankets are the best in the world, I never saw anything so white, soft and light.

I had a note from Mamma with an exquisite embroidered handkerchief yesterday. We reach Ogden tomorrow night.

Much love to you dear, Your, May. Tuesday — Near Ogden on Great Salt Lake. Nothing now to say, the day lovely and bay as beautiful though different from last time. Sister, Mrs. Palmer, Miss Fox went in engine cab today, change cars tonight or tomorrow for

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Cheyenne, hope you are enjoying Thanksgiving with the Sanders or some good friends.  
Hope for letters at Ogden but hardly expected.